

WE CLAIM:

1. A guide wire comprising:  
a core, and  
a plastic jacket enclosing said core, said  
5 plastic jacket comprising:  
a proximal jacket portion formed of a first  
plastic material, and  
a distal jacket portion formed of a second  
plastic material, the distal end of said proximal  
10 jacket portion and the proximal end of said distal  
jacket portion substantially of equal outer  
diameters so as to form a substantially smooth  
transition between said proximal and said distal  
jacket portions.
- 15 2. The guide wire of Claim 1 wherein said  
distal jacket portion is made of polyurethane.
3. The guide wire of Claim 1 wherein said  
proximal jacket portion is made of Teflon.
- 20 4. The guide wire of Claim 1 wherein said  
distal jacket portion has radiopaque properties.
5. The guide wire of Claim 4 wherein said  
distal jacket portion is loaded with a material  
selected from a group consisting of bismuth, barium,  
and tungsten.
- 25 6. The guide wire of Claim 1 further  
comprising a marker located around a distal end of said  
core beneath said plastic jacket.

7. The guide wire of Claim 6 wherein said marker is substantially radiopaque.

8. A guide wire of Claim 1 wherein said distal jacket portion has a hydrophilic coating.

5 9. The guide wire of Claim 8 wherein said proximal jacket portion does not have a hydrophilic coating.

10 10. The guide wire of Claim 1 wherein said core is formable in at least a portion thereof.

11. The guide wire of Claim 10 wherein said core is made of stainless steel.

12. The guide wire of Claim 10 in which the core is formable in a distal portion thereof and non-formable in a proximal portion thereof.

15 13. A guide wire comprising:  
a metallic core formable in at least a portion thereof, and  
a plastic jacket encasing said core, said plastic jacket having a distal portion with a hydrophilic coating and a proximal portion without a hydrophilic coating.

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14. The guide wire of Claim 13 wherein said core is made of stainless steel.

25 15. The guide wire of Claim 13 wherein said core is tapered at a distal end thereof.

16. The guide wire of Claim 13 in which the core is formable in a distal portion thereof and non-formable in a proximal portion thereof.

5 17. The guide wire of Claim 16 in which the core is made of nitinol.

18. A guide wire comprising:  
a metallic core formable in at least a portion thereof, and  
10 a plastic jacket encasing said core, said plastic jacket having a distal portion and a proximal portion, said distal portion being more radiopaque than said proximal portion.

15 19. The guide wire of Claim 18 wherein said distal portion is loaded with a material selected from a group consisting of bismuth, barium, and tungsten.

20 20. The guide wire of Claim 19 further comprising a marker located at a distal end of said core beneath said plastic jacket.

21. The guide wire of Claim 20 wherein said marker is substantially radiopaque.

22. A guide wire comprising:  
a core formable in a distal portion thereof and non-formable in a proximal portion thereof.

25 23. The guide wire of Claim 22 wherein said core is made of nitinol.

24. A method for making a guide wire comprising the steps of:

heat shrinking a proximal jacket of Teflon onto a proximal end of a core wire; and

5 heating a jacket of polyurethane to a temperature until it is reformed around and encases a distal portion of the core wire.

25. The method of Claim 24 including the step of:

10 finishing the outside surfaces of the jackets of Teflon and polyurethane by centerless grinding so that the transition between the jackets is smooth.

26. A method for making a guide wire comprising the steps of:

15 providing a superelastic core wire; and treating the core wire in a portion thereof to provide the property of formability.

27. The method of Claim 26 further comprising:

20 encasing the core wire in a plastic jacket so that the formable portion of said core wire corresponds to a distal end of the guide wire and the superelastic portion thereof corresponds to a proximal end of the guide wire.